

Senate Caucus on Foster Youth Briefing Series: The Impact of Substance Abuse and Mental Disorders on Children and Families Involved in the Child Welfare System



Part Three: Promising Solutions for the Future

What Can Be Done to Meet Child and Family Substance Abuse and Mental Health Needs?

The final briefing in our series will focus on the outcomes that have been achieved by providing preventive and in-home services and by addressing other existing program and policy gaps for children and families impacted by substance abuse and mental health issues. We'll discuss legislative proposals and recommendations on how to better provide comprehensive family-centered prevention and in-home services, effective and accessible treatment services for families in the child welfare system and keeping children safe and families together moving forward.

Thursday, May 5 at 10:00 am
Capitol Visitors Center SVC 203
[RSVP HERE](#) to gain entry into the Capitol

SPEAKERS

Nancy K. Young, Ph.D., Executive Director, Children and Family Futures. Dr. Young will provide an overview of the major findings and outcomes of government investments related to substance abuse and child welfare, and highlight what these findings tell us about how to move forward in future policymaking.

Becky Shipp, Health and Human Services Policy Advisor, Senate Committee on Finance. Ms. Shipp will discuss various legislative proposals to address the issue of substance abuse including The "Family First Act" which is a bipartisan pro-family proposal designed to address issues associated with the opioid crisis. The FFA would support up front evidence based, time limited interventions to keep children safely at home, address issues of opioid addiction, support adoption and kin placements and reduce the reliance on group homes.

Tianna Van Tassel, Deputy Director, Bridges, Inc. and Program Director of the Specialized Treatment and Recovery Services (STARS) program in Sacramento County, California. In 2001, Sacramento implemented a family drug court serving families with a child who was placed in care. In 2007, as part of the Regional Partnership Grant, they migrated their lessons to serve the in-home population in an Early Intervention Family Drug Court which has significantly improved outcomes. Tianna will discuss evidence-based parenting programs and how to effectively engage parents for timely access to treatment and keeping children at home.

John D. Damon, Ph.D., Chief Executive Officer, Mississippi Children's Home Services, a comprehensive provider of children's behavioral health, education, and social services. Dr. Damon will discuss policies to improve behavioral health services for children in the foster care system.

Aviva Okeson Haberman, 18, Missouri. Aviva entered foster care when she was 17 years old due to parental mental health challenges. The mental health services she is receiving now have helped tremendously, but may not be available after reunification. She plans to study journalism at the University of Missouri in hopes of becoming a documentary filmmaker.

Mark Casas, 23, California. Mark entered the foster care system at the age of 13 and spent 5 years in care because of parental mental health challenges. He is in his junior year at California State University, Fullerton, and is pursuing a degree in Psychology with a minor in Art.

Senate Caucus on Foster Youth Co-Chairs: Senator Grassley (IA) and Debbie Stabenow (MI)